# THE COUNTRY JUSTICE.

## A POEM.

PART THE FIRST.

[ Price 1s. 6d. ]

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BY ONE OF HIS MAJESTY's JUSTICES OF THE PEACE FOR THE COUNTY OF SOMERSET.

By Langhorne

PART THE FIRST.

LONDON:

Printed for T. BECKET, in PALL-MALL.

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BRITISH MUSEUM
Mdcc,lxxx.

TO

# RICHARD BURN, LL. D.

ONE OF HIS MAJESTY's JUSTICES OF THE PEACE FOR THE COUNTIES OF WESTMORLAND AND CUMBERLAND.

DEAR SIR,

A POEM written profeſſedly at your requeſt, naturally addreſſes itſelf to you. The diſtinction you have acquired on the ſubject, and your taſte for the arts, give that addreſs every kind of propriety. If I have any particular ſatisfaction in this publication, beſide what ariſes from my

compliance with your commands, it muſt be in the idea of that teſtimony it bears to our Friendſhip. If you believe that I am more concerned for the duration of that than of the Poem itſelf, you will not be miſtaken; for I am,

Dear Sir,

Your truly affectionate Brother,

and faithful humble Servant,

Somerſetſhire,
April 25, 1774.

THE AUTHOR.

# THE
# COUNTRY JUSTICE.

## INTRODUCTION.

IN RICHARD's days, when loſt his paſtured plain,
The wand'ring Briton ſought the wild wood's reign,
With great diſdain beheld the feudal Hord,
Poor life-lett Vaſſals of a Norman Lord;
And, what no brave man ever loſt, poſſeſs'd
Himſelf,---for Freedom bound him to her Breaſt.

Lov'ſt Thou that Freedom? By her holy ſhrine,
If yet one drop of Britiſh Blood be thine,

See, I conjure Thee, in the deſart ſhade,
His Bow unſtrung, his little houſehold laid,
Some brave Forefather; while his Fields they ſhare,
By Saxon, Dane, or Norman baniſh'd there!
And think He tells Thee, as his Soul withdraws,
As his Heart ſwells againſt a Tyrant's Laws,
The War with Fate though fruitleſs to maintain,
To guard that Liberty he lov'd in vain.

Were Thoughts like theſe the Dream of ancient Time?
Peculiar only to ſome Age, or Clime?
And does not Nature thoughts like theſe impart,
Breathe in the Soul, and write upon the Heart?
Aſk on their Mountains yon deſerted Band,
That point to PAOLI with no plauſive Hand;
Deſpiſing ſtill, their freeborn Souls unbroke,
Alike the *Gallic* and *Ligurian* Yoke!

Yet

Yet while the Patriots' gen'rous rage we ſhare,
Still *civil Safety* calls us back to Care;---
To Britain loſt in either HENRY's day,
Her woods, her Mountains one wild Scene of Prey!
Fair Peace from all her bounteous Vallies fled,
And Law beneath the barbed Arrow bled.

In happier Days, with more auſpicious Fate,
The far-fam'd Edward heal'd his wounded State;
Dread of his Foes, but to his Subjects dear,
Theſe learn'd to love, as thoſe are taught to fear,
Their laurell'd Prince with Britiſh Pride obey,
His Glory ſhone their Diſcontent away.

With Care the tender Flow'r of Love to ſave,
And plant the Olive on *Diſorder*'s Grave,
For civil Storms freſh Barriers to provide,
He caught the fav'ring Calm and falling Tide.

*The Appointment, and its Purpoſes.*

The ſocial Laws from Inſult to protect,
To cheriſh Peace, to cultivate Reſpect;
The rich from wanton Cruelty reſtrain,
To ſmooth the bed of Penury and Pain;
The hapleſs Vagrant to his Reſt reſtore,
The maze of Fraud, the Haunts of Theft explore;
The thoughtleſs Maiden, when ſubdu'd by Art,
To aid, and bring her Rover to her Heart;
Wild Riot's Voice with Dignity to quell,
Forbid unpeaceful Paſſions to rebel,
Wreſt from Revenge the meditated Harm,
For this fair JUSTICE rais'd her ſacred Arm;
For this the rural Magiſtrate, of Yore,
Thy Honours, Edward, to his Manſion bore.

*Antient*

*Ancient Juſtice's Hall.*

Oft, where old AIR in conſcious Glory ſails,
On ſilver Waves that flow thro' ſmiling Vales.
In Harewood's Groves, where long my Youth was laid,
Unſeen beneath their antient World of Shade,
With many a Group of antique Columns crown'd,
In Gothic Guiſe ſuch Manſion have I found.

Nor lightly deem, ye Apes of modern Race,
Ye Cits that ſore bedizen Nature's Face,
Of the more manly Structures here ye view;
They roſe for Greatneſs that ye never knew!
Ye reptile Cits, that oft have mov'd my Spleen
With *Venus*, and the *Graces* on your Green!
Let *Plutus*, growling o'er his ill-got Wealth,
Let *Mercury*, the thriving God of Stealth,
The Shopman, *Janus*, with his double Looks,
Riſe on your Mounts, and perch upon your Books!

But,

But, ſpare my *Venus*, ſpare each Sifter Grace,
Ye Cits, that ſore bedizen Nature's Face!

Ye Royal Architects, whoſe antic Taſte,
Would lay the Realms of Senſe and Nature waſte;
Forgot, whenever from her ſteps ye ſtray,
That Folly only points each other way;
Here, tho' your Eye no *courtly* Creature ſees,
*Snakes* on the ground, or *Monkies* in the Trees;
Yet let not too ſevere a Cenſure fall,
On the plain Precincts of the antient Hall.

For tho' no Sight your childiſh Fancy meets,
Of Thibets' Dogs, or China's Perroquets;
Tho' Apes, Aſps, Lizzards, Things without a Tail,
And all the Tribes of foreign Monſters fail;
Here ſhall ye ſigh to ſee, with Ruſt o'ergrown,
The Iron Griffin and the Sphynx of Stone;

And mourn, neglected in their waſte abodes,
Fire-breathing Drakes, and water-ſpouting Gods.

Long have theſe mighty Monſters known Diſgrace,
Yet ſtill ſome Trophies hold their ancient place;
Where, round the Hall, the Oak's high ſurbaſe rears
The Field-day Triumphs of two hundred years.

Th' enormous Antlers here recal the day
That ſaw the Foreſt-Monarch *fort'd away*;
Who, many a Flood, and many a Mountain paſt,
Nor finding thoſe, nor deeming theſe the laſt,
O'er Floods, o'er Mountains yet prepar'd to fly,
Long ere the Death-drop fill'd his failing Eye!

Here, fam'd for Cunning, and in Crimes grown old,
Hangs his grey Bruſh, the Felon of the Fold.
Oft, as the Rent Feaſt ſwells the Midnight Cheer,
The Maudlin Farmer kens him o'er his Beer,

And tells his old, traditionary Tale,
Tho' known to ev'ry Tenant of the Vale.

Here, where, of old, the feſtal Ox has fed,
Mark'd with his weight, the mighty Horns are ſpread:
Some Ox, O MARSHALL, for a Board like thine,
Where the vaſt Maſter with the vaſt Sir Loin
Vied in round Magnitude---Reſpect I bear
To Thee, tho' oft the Ruin of the Chair.

Theſe, and ſuch antique Tokens, that record
The manly Spirit, and the bounteous Board,
Me more delight than all the Gew-gaw Train,
The Whims and Zigzags of a modern Brain,
More than all Aſia's Marmoſets to view
Grin, friſk, and water in the Walks of Kew.

## *Character of a Country Juſtice.*

Thro' theſe fair Vallies, Stranger, haſt Thou ſtray'd,
By any Chance, to viſit *Harewood*'s Shade,
And ſeen with honeſt, antiquated Air,
In the plain Hall the Magiſtratial Chair?
There *Herbert* ſate---the Love of human kind,
Pure Light of Truth, and Temperance of Mind,
In the free Eye the featur'd Soul diſplay'd,
*Honour*'s ſtrong Beam, and *Mercy*'s melting Shade;
*Juſtice*, that, in the rigid Paths of Law,
Would ſtill ſome Drops from *Pity*'s Fountain draw,
Bend o'er her Urn with many a gen'rous Fear,
Ere his firm Seal ſhould force one Orphan's Tear;
Fair *Equity*, and *Reaſon* ſcorning Art,
And all the ſober Virtues of the Heart,---

Theſe ſate with *Herbert*, theſe ſhall beſt avail,
Where Statutes order; or where Statutes fail.

*General Motives for Lenity.*

Be this, ye rural Magiſtrates, your Plan:
Firm be your Juſtice, but be Friends to Man.

He whom the mighty Maſter of this Ball,
We fondly deem, or farcically call,
To own the Patriarch's Truth however loth,
Holds but a Manſion *cruſh'd before the Moth.*

Frail in his Genius, in his Heart, too, frail,
Born but to err, and erring to bewail,
Shalt Thou his Faults with Eye ſevere explore,
And give to Life one human Weakneſs more?

Still mark if Vice or Nature prompts the Deed;
Still mark the ſtrong Temptation and the Need:

On

On preſſing Want, on Famine's pow'rful call,
At leaſt more lenient let thy Juſtice fall.

*Apology for Vagrants.*

For Him, who, loſt to ev'ry Hope of Life,
Has long with Fortune held unequal ſtrife,
Known to no human Love, no human Care,
The friendleſs, homeleſs Object of Deſpair;
For the poor Vagrant, feel, while He complains,
Nor from ſad Freedom ſend to ſadder Chains.
Alike, if Folly or Misfortune brought
Thoſe laſt of Woes his evil Days have wrought;
Believe with ſocial Mercy and with Me,
Folly's Misfortune in the firſt Degree.

Perhaps on ſome inhoſpitable Shore
The houſeleſs Wretch a widow'd Parent bore;
Who, then, no more by golden Proſpects led,
Of the poor Indian begg'd a Leafy bed.

Cold on Canadian Hills, or Minden's Plain,
Perhaps that Parent mourn'd her Soldier ſlain;
Bent o'er her Babe, her Eye diſſolv'd in Dew,
The big Drops mingling with the Milk He drew,
Gave the ſad Preſage of his future Years,
The Child of Miſery, baptiz'd in Tears!

*Apoſtrophe to* EDWARD *the Third.*

O Edward, here thy faireſt Laurels fade!
And thy long Glories darken into Shade!

While yet the Palms thy hardy Veterans won,
The Deeds of Valour that for thee were done,
While yet the Wreaths for which they bravely bled,
Fir'd thy high Soul, and flouriſh'd on thy Head,
Thoſe Veterans to their native Shores return'd,
Like Exiles wander'd, and like Exiles mourn'd;

Or, left *at large* no longer to bewail,
Were Vagrants deem'd, and deſtined to a jail!

Were there no Royal, yet uncultur'd Lands,
No Waſtes that wanted ſuch ſubduing Hands?
Were CRESSY's Heroes ſuch abandon'd Things?
O Fate of War! and Gratitude of Kings!

*The Gypſey-Life.*

The Gypſey-Race my Pity rarely move;
Yet their ſtrong thirſt of Liberty I love.
Not WILKES, our Freedom's holy Martyr, more;
Nor his firm *Phalanx*, of the common Shore.

For this in Norwood's patrimonial Groves,
The tawny Father with his Offspring roves;

When

When Summer Suns lead ſlow the ſultry Day,
In moſſy Caves, where welling Waters play,
Fann'd by each Gale that cools the fervid Sky,
With this in ragged Luxury they lie.
Oft at the Sun the duſky Elfins ſtrain
The ſable Eye, then, ſnugging, ſleep again;
Oft, as the Dews of cooler Evening fall,
For their prophetic Mother's Mantle call.

Far other Cares that wandering Mother wait,
The Mouth, and oft the Miniſter of Fate!
From her to hear, in Ev'ning's friendly ſhade,
Of future Fortune, flies the Village-Maid,
Draws her long-hoarded Copper from its hold;
And ruſty Halfpence purchaſe hopes of Gold.

But, ah! ye Maids, beware the Gypſey's Lures!
She opens not the Womb of Time, but yours.

Oft has her Hands the hapleſs *Marian* wrung,
*Marian*, whom *Gay* in ſweeteſt Strains has ſung!
The Parſon's Maid---ſore Cauſe had ſhe to rue
The Gypſey's Tongue; the Parſon's Daughter too.
Long had that anxious Daughter ſigh'd to know
What Vellum's ſprucy Clerk, the Valley's Beau,
Meant by thoſe Glances, which at Church he ſtole,
Her Father nodding to the Pſalm's ſlow Drawl;
Long had ſhe ſigh'd, at length a Prophet came,
By many a ſure Prediction known to Fame,
To *Marian* known, and all ſhe told, for true:
She knew the future, for the paſt ſhe knew.

Where, in the darkling Shed, the Moon's dim Rays
Beam'd on the Ruins of a One-Horſe Chaiſe
Villaria ſate, while faithful *Marian* brought
The wayward Prophet of the Woe ſhe fought.

Twice did her Hands, the Income of the Week,
On either ſide, the crooked Sixpence ſeek;
Twice were thoſe Hands withdrawn from either ſide,
To ſtop the titt'ring Laugh, the Bluſh to hide.
The wayward Prophet made no long Delay,
No Novice ſhe in Fortune's devious way!
"Ere yet, ſhe cried, ten rolling Months are o'er,
"Muſt ye be Mothers; Maids, at leaſt no more.
"With you ſhall ſoon, O Lady fair, prevail
"A gentle Youth, the Flower of this fair Vale.
"To *Marian*, once of Colin Clout the Scorn,
"Shall Bumkin come, and Bumkinets be born."

Smote to the Heart, the Maiden's Marvell'd ſore,
That Ten ſhort Months had ſuch Events in ſtore;
But holding firm, what Village-Maids believe,
*That Strife with Fate is milking in a Sieve*;

To

To prove their Prophet true, tho' to their Coſt,
They juſtly thought no Time was to be loſt.

Theſe Foes to Youth, that ſeek, with dang'rous Art,
To aid the native Weakneſs of the Heart;
Theſe Miſcreants from thy harmleſs Village drive,
As Waſps felonious from the lab'ring Hive.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

To prove their Prophet true, tho' to their Cost,
They justly thought no Time was to be lost.

Thele Foes to Youth, that teem with dang'rous Art,
To aid the native Weakneſs of the Heart;
Thele Miſcreants from thy harmleſs Village drive,
As Waſps felonious from the lab'ring Hive.

END OF THE FIRST PART.